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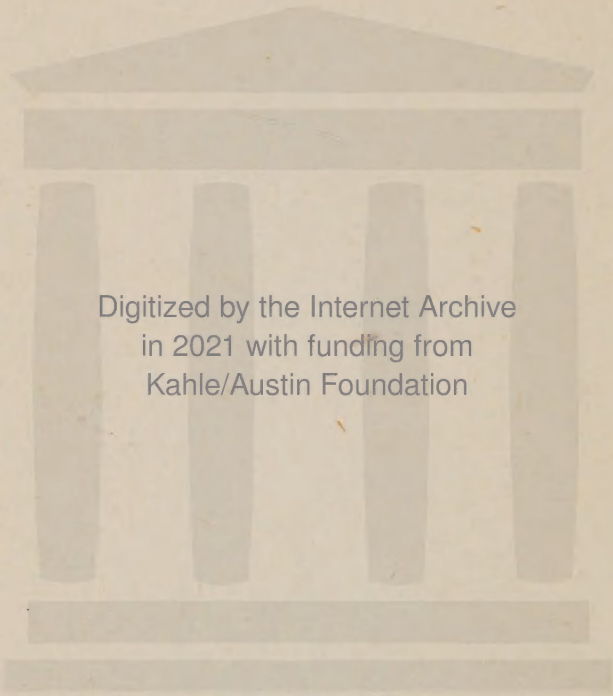
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THE INNER LIFE.



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# THE INNER LIFE.

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*A Series of Addresses*

By

INAYAT KHAN, 1882-1926.

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# THE INNER LIFE

## I

### THE PREPARATION FOR THE JOURNEY

**T**HE inner life is a journey, and before starting to take it there is a certain preparation necessary. If one is not prepared there is always the risk of having to return before one has arrived at one's destination. When a person goes on a journey and when he has to accomplish something, he must know what is necessary on the path, and what he must take with him in order that his journey may become easy and that he may accomplish what he has started to accomplish. The journey one takes in the inner life is as long as the distance between life and death, it being the longest journey one ever takes throughout life; and one must have everything prepared, so that after reaching a certain distance one may not have to turn back.

The first thing that is necessary is to see that there is no debt to be paid. Every soul has a certain debt to pay in life; it may be to his mother or father, his brother or sister, to his husband or wife or friend, or to his children, his race or to humanity; and if he has not paid what is due, then there are cords with which he is inwardly tied, and they pull him back. Life in the world is fair trade,—if one could only understand it, if one knew how many souls there are in this world with whom one

is connected or related in some way. Or those we meet freshly every day, to everyone there is something due, and if one has not paid one's obligations, the result is that afterwards one has to pay with interest. There is the inner justice which is working beyond the worldly justice, and when man does not observe that inner law of justice, it is because at that time he is intoxicated, his eyes are closed, and he really does not know the law of life. But that intoxication will not last,—there will come a day when the eyes of every soul will be opened, and it is a pity if the eyes open when it is too late. It is better that the eyes are opened while the purse is full, for it will be very difficult if the eyes open at the time when the purse is empty. To some consideration is due, to some respect, to some service, to some tolerance, to some forgiveness, to some help,—in some way or other, in every relation, in every connection there is something to pay, and one must know before starting the journey that one has paid it, and be sure that one has paid it in full, so there is nothing more to be paid. Besides this it is necessary that man realizes before starting his journey that he has fulfilled his duties,—his duty to those around him and his duty to God. But the one who considers his duty to those around him sacredly does his duty to God.

Man must also consider before starting on his journey whether he has learned all he desired to learn from this world. If there is anything he has not learned, he must finish it before starting the journey. For if he thinks "I will start the journey, although I had the desire to learn something before

starting," in that case he will not be able to reach his goal. That desire to learn something will draw him back. Every desire, every ambition, every aspiration that he has in life must be gratified. Not only this,—man must have no remorse of any kind when starting on this journey and no repentance afterwards. If there is any repentance or remorse it must be finished before starting. There must be no grudge against anybody, and no complaining of anyone having done him harm, for all these things which belong to this world, if man took them along, would become a burden on the spiritual path. The journey is difficult enough, and it becomes more difficult if there is a burden to be carried. If a person is lifting a burden of displeasure, dissatisfaction, discomfort, it is difficult to bear it on that path. It is a path to freedom, and to start on this path to freedom man must free himself,—no attachment should pull him back, no pleasure should lure him back.

Besides this preparation one needs a vehicle, a vehicle in which he journeys. That vehicle has two wheels, and they are balance in all things. A man who is one-sided, however great his power of clairvoyance or clairaudience, whatever be his knowledge, yet he is limited, he cannot go very far, for it requires two wheels for the vehicle to run. There must be a balance,—the balance of the head and the heart, the balance of power and wisdom, the balance of activity and repose. It is the balance which enables man to stand the strain of this journey and permits him to go forward, making his path easy. Never imagine for one moment that

those who show lack of balance can ever proceed further on the spiritual journey, however greatly in appearance they may seem to be spiritually inclined. It is only the balanced ones who are capable of experiencing the external life as fully as the inner life ; to enjoy thought as much as feeling, to rest as well as to act. The centre of life is rythm, and rythm causes balance.

On this journey certain coins are necessary also, to spend on the way. And what are these coins? They are thoughtful expressions in word and in action. On this journey man must take provision to eat and drink, and that provision is life and light. And on this journey man has to take something in which to clothe himself against wind and storm and heat and cold, and that garment is the vow of secrecy, the tendency to silence. On this journey man has to bid farewell to others when starting, and that farewell is loving detachment ; before starting on this journey he has to leave something behind with his friends, and that is happy memories of the past.

Friends, we are all on the journey ; life itself is a journey. No one is settled here, we are all passing onward, and therefore it is not true to say that if we are taking a spiritual journey we have to break our settled life ; there is no one living a settled life here ; all are unsettled, all are on their way. Only, by taking the spiritual journey you are taking another way, one which is easier, better and more pleasant. Those who do not take this way, they also will come in the end : the difference is in the way. One way is easier, smoother, better ; the



other way is full of difficulties, and as life has no end of difficulties from the time one has opened one's eyes on this earth, so one may just as well choose the smoother way to arrive at the destination at which all souls will some time arrive.

By Inner Life is meant a life directed toward Perfection, which may be called the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty ; in the words of the orthodox, toward God.

The inner life is not necessarily in an opposite direction to the worldly life, but the inner life is a fuller life. The worldly life means the limitedness of life ; the inner life means a complete life. The ascetics who have taken a direction quite opposite to the worldly life, have done so in order to have the facility to search into the depths of life, but by going in one direction alone, it does not make a complete life. Therefore the inner life means the, fulness of life.

In brief one may say that the inner life consists of two things ; action with knowledge, and repose with passivity of mind. By accomplishing these two contrary motions, and by keeping balanced in these two directions, one comes to the fulness of life. A person who lives the inner life is as innocent as a child ; even more innocent than a child, but at the same time more wise than many clever people put together. This shows as a development in two contrary directions. The innocence of Jesus is known to the ages. In his every movement, in his every action, he showed to be as a child. All the great saints and sages,—the Great Ones who have liberated humanity, have been as innocent

as children, and at the same time wiser, much more so, than the worldly wise. And what makes it so? What gives them this balance? It is repose with passiveness. When they stand before God they stand with their heart as an empty cup; when they stand before God to learn they unlearn all things that the world has taught them; when they stand before God their ego, their self, their life, is no more before them. They do not think of themselves in that moment; with any desire to be fulfilled, with any motive to be accomplished, with any expression of their own; but as empty cups that God may fill their being, that they may lose the false self.

Therefore the same thing helps them in their every-day life to show a glimpse of the quiet moment of repose they had with God. They show in their everyday life innocence, and yet not ignorance; they know things, and they do not know. They know if somebody is telling a lie, but do they accuse that person, do they say, "you are telling a lie?" They are above it. They know all the plays of the world, and they look at them all passively; they rise above things of this world which make no impression on them. They take people quite simply. Some may think that they are ignorant in their world-lives, that they take no notice of things that are of no importance. Activity with wisdom makes them more wise, because it is not everybody in this world who directs his every action with wisdom. There are many who never consult wisdom in their action; there are others who seek refuge under wisdom after their action, and very

often it is then too late. But the ones who live the inner life all direct their activity with wisdom ; every moment, every action, every thought, every word is first thought out, is first weighed and measured and analyzed before it is expressed. Therefore in the world everything they do is with wisdom, but before God they stand with innocence, there they do not take worldly wisdom.

Man often makes mistakes, either by taking one way or the other, and therefore he lacks balance and he does not come to touch perfection. For an instance, when he takes the way of activity in the path of God, he also wishes to use his wisdom there ; in the path of God also he wishes to be active where he does not need action. It is just like swimming against the tide ; where you must be innocent, if you use your wisdom there it is the greatest error. Then there are others who are accustomed to take passivity as a principle with which they stand before God in their innocence ; and they wish to use the same principle in all directions of life which would not be right.

## II

### THE OBJECT OF THE JOURNEY

**T**HE first and principal thing in the inner life is to establish a relation with God, making God the object with which we relate ourselves, such as Creator, Sustainer, Forgiver, Judge, Friend, Father, Mother and Beloved. In every relation we must place God before us, and become conscious of that

relation so that it will no more remain an imagination, because the first thing a believer does is to imagine. He imagines that God is the Creator and tries to believe that God is the Sustainer ; and he makes an effort to think that God is a Friend, and an attempt to feel that he loves God. But when this imagination would become a reality then exactly as one feels for one's earthly beloved sympathy, love and attachment, so one must feel the same with God. However greatly a person may be pious, good or righteous, yet without this his piety or his goodness are not a reality to him.

The work of the inner life is to make God a reality, so that He is no more an imagination ; that this relation that man has with God may seem to him more real than any other relation in this world, and when this happens then all relations, however near and dear, become less binding. But at the same time by that a person does not become cold ; he becomes more loving. It is the godless man who is cold, impressed by the selfishness and lovelessness of this world, because he partakes of those conditions in which he lives. But the one who is in love with God, the one who has established his relation with God, his love becomes living ; he is no more cold ; he fulfils his duties to those related to him in this world much more than does the godless man.

Now, as to the way in which man establishes this relation, and which relation is the most desirable to establish with God, what should he imagine ? God as Father, as Creator, as Judge, as Forgiver, as Friend, or as Beloved ?

The answer is, that in every capacity of life we must give God the place that is demanded by the moment. When crushed by the injustice, the coldness of the world, when man looks at God the perfection of Justice, he no more remains agitated, his heart is no more disturbed, he consoles himself with the justice of God. He places the just God before him, and by this he learns justice. The sense of justice awakens in his heart, and he sees things in quite a different light. When man finds in this world the motherless or fatherless, then he thinks that there is the mother and father in God ; and even if he was in the presence of the mother and father, that these are only related on the earth. The Motherhood and Fatherhood of God is the only real relation. The mother and father of the earth only reflect a spark of that motherly and fatherly love which God has in fulness and perfection. Then man finds that God can forgive, as the parents can forgive the child if he was in error. Then man feels the goodness, kindness, protection, support, sympathy coming from every side, he learns to feel that it comes from God, the Father-mother through all. When man pictures God as Forgiver he finds that there is not only in this world a strict justice, but there is love developed also, there is mercy and compassion, there is that sense of forgiveness, that God is not the servant of law, as is the Judge in this world, He is Master of law ; He judges when He judges, when He forgives He forgives ; He has both powers, He has the power to judge and He has the power to forgive. He is Judge because he does not close His eyes to all

man does ; He knows, He weighs and measures and He returns what is due to man ; and He is Forgiver because beyond and above His power of justice there is His great power of Love and Compassion which is His very being, which is His own nature, and therefore it is more and in greater proportion and working with a greater activity than His power of justice. We, the human beings in this world, if there is a spark of goodness or kindness in our hearts, avoid judging people. We prefer forgiving to judging. Forgiving gives us naturally a greater happiness than taking revenge ; unless a man is on quite a different path.

The man who realizes God as a friend is never lonely in the world, neither in this world nor in the hereafter. There is always a friend, a friend in the crowd, a friend in the solitude, or while he is asleep unconscious of this outer world, and when he is awake and conscious of it ; in both cases the friend is there in his thought, in his imagination, in his heart, in his soul. And the man who makes God his Beloved, what more does he want ? His heart becomes awakened to all the beauty there is within and without. To him all things appeal, everything unfolds itself, and it is beauty to his eyes, because God is all-pervading, in all Names and all Forms ; therefore his Beloved is never absent. How happy therefore is the one whose Beloved is never absent, because the whole tragedy of life is the absence of the beloved, and one whose beloved is always there, when he has closed his eyes the Beloved is within, when he has opened his eyes the Beloved is without. His every sense perceives the Beloved ; his eyes see



Him, his ears hear His voice. When a person arrives at this realization then he so-to-speak lives in the presence of God ; then to him the different forms and beliefs, faiths and communities do not count. To him God is all-in-all ; to him God is everywhere. If he goes to the Christian Church or to the Synagogue, to the Buddhist temple, to the Hindu shrine, or to the mosque of the Muslim, there is God. In the wilderness, in the forest, in the crowd, everywhere he sees God.

This shows that the inner life does not consist in closing the eyes and looking inward. The inner life is to look outwardly *and* inwardly and to find one's belief everywhere. But God cannot be made a Beloved unless the love element is awakened sufficiently. The one who hates his enemy and loves his friend, he cannot call God his Beloved, for he does not know God. When love comes to its fulness, then one looks at the friend with affection, on the enemy with forgiveness, on the stranger with sympathy. There is love in all its aspects expressed when love rises to its fulness, and it is the fulness of love which is worth offering to God. It is that time when man recognizes in God one's Beloved, one's Ideal, and by that, although he rises above the narrow affection of this world, in reality he is the one who knows how to love even his friend. It is the lover of God who knows love, when he rises to that stage of the fulness of love.

The whole imagery of the Sufi literature in the Persian language, written by great poets, such as Rumi, Hafiz, and Jami, is the relation between man as the lover and God as Beloved,

and when one reads understanding that, and developed in that affection, then one sees what pictures the mystics have made and to what note their heart has been tuned. It is not easy to develop in the heart the love of God, because when one does not see or realize the object of love one cannot love. God must become tangible in order that one may love Him, but once a person has attained to love God he has really entered the journey of the spiritual path.

### III

#### FULFILMENT OF THE OBLIGATIONS OF HUMAN LIFE

THE position of the person living the inner life becomes like that of a grown-up person living among many children. At the same time, outwardly there seems no such difference as is apparent in the age of the children and the grown person, the difference lying in the size of his outlook which is not always apparent. One who lives the inner life becomes much older than those around him, and yet outwardly he is the same as every other person. Therefore the man who has arrived at the fulness of the inner life adopts quite a different policy to the one who is just beginning to tread that path, and also a different one to that of the man who knows intellectually something about the inner life, but who really does not live it. The action again is different in the world, for the latter will criticize others who do not know what he thinks he knows, and will look upon them with pride and conceit, or with contempt, to think that they

have not risen to the mystery, to the height to which he has risen, and which he understands. He wishes to disconnect himself with people, saying that they are backward in their evolution, and that he cannot go with them. He says: "I am more advanced; I cannot join them in anything; they are different, I am different." He laughs at the petty ideas of those who surround him, and looks upon them as human beings with whom he must not associate, with whom he must not join in all things they do because he is much more advanced than they are.

But for the one who comes to the fulness of the inner life it is a great joy to mingle with his fellow-man, just as it is for parents to play with their little children; the best moments of their lives are when they feel as a child with their children and when they can join in the play of the children. The parents who are kind and loving, if a child brings to them a doll's cup will pretend that they are drinking tea, and that they are enjoying it; they do not let the child think that they are superior, or that this is something in which they must not join. They play with the child, and they are happy with it, because the happiness of the children is theirs also.

That is the action of the man who lives the inner life, and it is for this reason that he agrees and harmonizes with people of all grades of evolution, whatever be their ideas, their thoughts, their belief, or their faith; in whatever form they worship or show their religious enthusiasm. He does not say: "I am much more advanced than you are, and to join

you would be going backwards." The one who has gone so far forward can never go backwards, but by joining them he takes them along with him, onward. If he went on alone he would consider that he avoided his duty towards his fellow man, which he should perform. It is the empty pitcher that makes the noise when you knock upon it, but the pitcher which is full of water does not make any sound, it is silent, speechless.

So the wise live among all the people of this world, and they are not unhappy. The one who loves all is not unhappy. Unhappy is he who looks with contempt at the world, who hates human beings, and thinks he is superior to them ; the one who loves them thinks only that they are going through the same process that he has gone through. It is from the darkness that he has to come into the light. It is just a difference of moments, and he with great patience passes those moments while his fellowmen are still in darkness, not making them know that they are in darkness, not letting them feel hurt about it, not looking upon them with contempt, only thinking that for every soul there is childhood, there is youth and maturity. So it is natural for every human being to go through this process. I have seen with my own eyes souls who have attained saintliness, and who have reached to great perfection ; and yet such a soul would stand before the idol of stone with another fellowman and worship, not letting him know that he was in any way more advanced than other men, keeping himself in a humble guise, not making any pretence that he had gone further in his spiritual evolution,"

The further such souls go, the more humble they become ; the greater the mystery they have realized, the less they speak about it. You would scarcely believe it if I were to tell you that during four years of the presence of my Murshid I have hardly more than once or twice had a conversation on spiritual matters. Usually the conversation was on worldly things, like everybody else ; nobody would perceive that here was a God-realized man, who was always absorbed in God. His conversation was like the conversation of every other person, he spoke on everything belonging to this world, never a spiritual conversation, nor any special show of piety, or spirituality, and yet his atmosphere, voice of his soul and his presence revealed all that was hidden in his heart. Those who are God-realized and those who have touched wisdom speak very little of the subject. It is those who do not know who try to discuss it, not because they know, but because they themselves have doubts. When there is knowledge there is satisfaction, there is no tendency towards dispute. When one disputes it is because there is something not satisfied. Friends, there is nothing in this world, wealth or rank, position, power, or learning that can give such conceit as the slightest little amount of spiritual knowledge, and once a person has that conceit then he cannot take a further step ; he is nailed down to that place where he stands, because the very idea of spiritual realization is in self-lessness. Man has either to realize himself as something, or as nothing. In this realization of nothingness there is spirituality. If one has any little knowledge of

the inner laws of nature, or if one has any sense of thinking, "how good I am, how kind I am, how generous, how good-mannered, how influential, or how attractive," the slightest idea of anything of this kind coming into the mind, closes the doors which lead into the spiritual world. It is such an easy path to tread and yet so difficult. Pride is so natural to a human being, man may deny a virtue a thousand times in words, but he cannot help admitting it with his feelings, for the ego itself is pride. Pride is the ego, man cannot live without it. In order to attain to spiritual knowledge, in order to become conscious of the inner life, one does not need to learn very much, because here he has to know what he already knows, only, he has to discover it himself. For his understanding of spiritual knowledge he does not need the knowledge of anything except himself. He acquires the knowledge of the self, which is himself, so near and yet so far.

Another thing the lover of God shows, is the same tendency as the human lover. He does not talk about his love to anybody. He cannot talk about it. Man cannot say how much he loves his beloved, no words can express it, and besides, he does not feel like talking about it to anybody. Even if he could, in the presence of his beloved he would close his lips. How then could the lover of God make a profession, "I love God!" The true lover of God keeps his love silently hidden in his heart, like a seed sown in the ground, and if the seedling grows, it grows in his actions towards his fellowman. He cannot act except with kindness, he cannot



feel anything but forgiveness ; every movement he makes, everything he does, speaks of his love, but not his lips.

That shows that in the inner life the greatest principle that one should observe is to be unassuming, quiet, without any show of wisdom, without any manifestation of learning, without any desire to let anyone know how far one has advanced, not even letting oneself know how far one has gone. The task to be accomplished is the entire forgetting of oneself and harmonizing with one's fellowman ; acting in agreement with all, meeting everyone on his own plane, speaking to everyone in his own tongue, answering the laughter of one's friends with a smile, and the pain of another with tears, standing by one's friends in their joy and their sorrow, whatever be one's own grade of evolution. If a man through his life became like an angel he would accomplish very little. The accomplishment which is most desirable for man is to fulfil the obligations of human life.

#### IV

#### THE REALIZATION OF THE INNER LIFE

THE principle of the one who experiences the inner life, is to become all things to all men throughout his life. In every situation, in every capacity, he answers the demand of the moment. Often people think that the spiritual person must be a man with sad looks, with a long face, with a serious expression and with a melancholy atmosphere. Really speaking, that picture is the exact

contrary of the real spiritual person. In all capacities the one who lives the inner life has to act outwardly as he ought in order to fit the occasion ; he must act according to the circumstances, and he must speak to everyone in his own language, standing upon the same level, and yet realizing the inner life.

For the knower of truth, the one who has attained spiritual knowledge, and who lives the inner life, there is no occupation in life which is too difficult , as a business man, as a professional man, as a king; a ruler, a poor man, a worldly man, as a priest or monk, in all aspects he is different to what people know and see of him. To the one who lives the inner life the world is a stage, on which he is the **actor, who has to act a part**, in which he has sometimes to be angry, and sometimes loving, and in which he has to take part both in tragedy and comedy. So also the one who has realized the inner life acts constantly ; and like the actor who does not feel the emotions he assumes, the spiritual man has to fill fittingly the place in which life has placed him. There he performs everything thoroughly and rightly, in order to fulfill his outer mission in life. He is a friend to his friend, a relative to his relatives. With all to whom he is outwardly related he keeps the right relationship with thought, with consideration, and yet in his realization he is above all relationships. He is in the crowd and in the solitude at the same time. He may be very much amused and at the same time he is very serious. He may seem very sad, and **yet there is joy welling up from his heart.**

Therefore the one who has realized the inner life is a mystery to every one ; no one can fathom the depth of that person, except that he promises sincerity, he emits love, he commands trust, he spreads goodness, and he gives an impression of God and the truth. For the man who has realized the inner life every act is his meditation ; if he is walking in the street it is his meditation ; if he is working as a carpenter, as a goldsmith or in any other trade or business that is his meditation. It does not matter if he is looking at heaven or at the earth, he is looking at the object that he worships. East or west or north or south, upon all sides is his God. In form, in principle, nothing restricts him. He may know things and yet may not speak, for if a man who lives the inner life were to speak of his experiences it would confuse many minds. There are some individuals in the world who from morning until evening have their eyes and their ears focussed on every dark corner, wanting to listen, or to see what they can find out ; and they find out nothing. If someone were to tell such people wonders he would have a very good occupation, the whole world would seek him. But such is not the work of the self-realized man. He sees and yet does not look ; if he were to look, how much he would see ! There is so much to be seen by one whose every glance, wherever it is cast, breaks through every object and discovers its depth and its secret. And if he were to look at things and find out their secrets and depths where would it end, and of what interest is it to him ?

The inner life, therefore, is seeing all things and

yet not seeing them, feeling all things and not expressing them, for they cannot be fully expressed ; understanding all things and not explaining ; how far can such a man explain, and how much can another understand ? Each according to the capacity he has, no more. The inner life is not lived by closing the eyes ; one need not close one's eyes from this world in order to live it, one can just as well open them.

The exact meaning of the inner life is not only to live in the body, but to live in the heart, to live in the soul. Why, then, does not the average man live the inner life when he too has a heart and a soul ? It is because he has a heart and yet is not conscious of it ; he has a soul and knows not what it is. When he lives in the captivity of the body, limited by that body, he can only feel a thing by touching it, he sees only by looking through his eyes, he hears only by hearing with his ears. How much can the ears hear and the eyes see ? All this experience obtained by the outer senses is limited. When man lives in this limitation he does not know another part of his being, which is much higher, more wonderful, more living, and more exalted exists. Once he begins to know this, then the body becomes his tool, for he lives in his heart, and then later he passes on and lives in his soul. He experiences life independently of his body, and that is called the inner life. Once man has experienced the inner life the fear of death has expired, because he knows death comes to the body, not to his inner being. When once he begins to realize life in his heart and in his soul, then he looks upon his body

as a coat. If the coat is old he puts it away and takes a new one, for his being does not depend upon his coat. The fear of death lasts only so long as man has not realized that his real being does not depend upon his body.

The joy therefore of the one who experiences the inner life is beyond comparison greater than that of the average man living only as a captive in his mortal body. Yet the inner life does not necessitate man's adopting a certain way of living, or living an ascetic, or a religious life. Whatever his outer occupation be it does not matter ; the man who lives the inner life lives through it all. Man always looks for a spiritual person in a religious person, or perhaps in what he calls a good person, or in someone with a philosophical mind, but that is not necessarily the case. A person may be religious, even philosophical, a person may be religious or good, and yet he may not live the inner life.

There is no distinct outward appearance which can prove a person to be living the inner life, except one thing. When a child grows toward youth, you can see in the expression of that child a light beaming out, a certain new consciousness arising, a new knowledge coming which the child has not known before. That is the sign of youth, yet the child does say so ; he cannot say it, even if he wanted to, he cannot explain it. And yet you can see it from every movement that the child makes ; from his every expression, you can find that he is realizing life now. And so it is with the soul, when the soul begins to realize the life above and beyond this life,

it begins to show ; and although the man who realizes this may refrain from purposely showing it, yet from his expression, his movement, his glance, his voice, from every action he does, and from every attitude, the wise can grasp, and the others can feel that he is conscious of some mystery.

The inner life is a birth of the soul ; as Christ said that unless the soul is born again it cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore the realization of the inner life is entering the kingdom of heaven ; and this consciousness when it comes to the human being shows itself as a new birth, and with this new birth there comes the assurance of everlasting life.

## V

### FREEDOM OF ACTION

AS a man grows through the inner life, so he feels a freedom of thought, speech and action which comes as a natural course through his spiritual journey. And the reason why this freedom comes and from whence it comes can be explained by the fact that there is a spirit of freedom hidden within man, covered by outward conventionalities. When man grows out of the outward conventionalities, then the spirit of freedom, which was closed in so far, becomes manifest.

The laws given to humanity are given by those far from such laws,—the Elder Ones. As for children, there are certain laws, certain rules necessary, so those who have not yet evolved to look at life from the higher point of view are fixed under certain



laws which are taught to them as religion ; and they are as necessary for mankind as the rules given to the children in the home. If there were no rules given, the children would become unruly ; but when the children become grown up then they begin to see for themselves the reason why rules were given to them, and the benefit that these rules were to them ; then they can make such rules for themselves as suit them best.

The inner life, therefore, helps a soul to grow up ; when the soul evolves from subjection to mastery, then it makes rules for itself. In the East, therefore, no one tries to criticise a spiritual person ; no one stands up to judge his action or to accuse him of something which he himself calls wrong. For this reason Jesus Christ has said : " Judge not." But this teaching has been given to point out that " judge not " applies to your equal ; for the one who is still more advanced, no one can judge. When man has the tendency to judge one more advanced than himself, the consequence is that spiritual advancement deteriorates, because however advanced he may be those who have not yet advanced pull him down. Therefore humanity instead of going forward goes backward. What happened in the case of Jesus Christ ? He was judged. The liberated soul,—the soul which was made free by divine nature, was judged at the court of man. The men less advanced considered themselves sufficiently learned to judge Christ, and not only to judge, but to give sentence.

In whatever period of civilization, therefore, the tendency to judge the one who is advanced

has shown itself, there has always come a collapse of the whole civilization. The Sufi Surmad, a great Saint, who lived in Gwalia, was asked by the Emperor Aurungzeb to attend at the mosque, for it was against the rules of the time that anyone kept away from the regular prayers, which took place in the mosque of the State. Sarmud being a man of ecstasy, living every moment of his day and night in union with God, being God-conscious himself, he perhaps forgot, or refused ; a certain time of prayer or a certain place for prayer for him was nothing. Every place for him was a place of prayer, every time was a time of prayer ; his every breath was a prayer. When he refused to attend prayers he was beheaded, for going against the rules which were made for everyone. The consequence was that the downfall of the whole Mogul Empire can be dated from that time ; the entire Mogul civilization, unique in its time, fell to pieces.

The Hindus have always known this philosophy, for the reason that they had a perfect religion, a religion in which one aspect of God was characterized as human, and their various Devas are nothing but various characteristics of human nature, each of them adored and worshipped. In this way not only God, but the whole human nature in all its aspects, was adored and worshipped. It is that which makes the Hindu religion perfect. When people say, "This place is sacred, and the other place is not sacred ; that particular thing is holy, and all other things not holy," in this way they divide life into many pieces, the life which is one, the life which cannot be divided.

Therefore those who rise above the ordinary conventionalities of life by their inner development, come to another consciousness. For them worldly laws are the laws for the children. Those who begin to see this difference between the laws they set before themselves and the laws that are observed by mankind, sometimes at first condemn and then disregard the common laws. They criticize them; and ask, "What is it all for?" But those who come to the fuller realization of the inner laws, show respect even for the laws of the children; knowing that they *are* the laws for the children and not for the grown-up, yet they respect them, for they know that it cannot be otherwise. The laws which they know can only manifest to the one whose soul rises to that realization, but before that soul rises it must have some law by which to live in harmony. Therefore advanced souls regard such laws with respect, and observe them when they are in the community. They do not condemn them, they will not criticise them. They realize that harmony is the principal thing in life and that we cannot be happy through life if we cannot harmonize with all those around us. Whatever be our grade of evolution, whatever be our outlook on life, and whatever be our freedom, we must have regard for the laws of the majority.

Now the question is, those who are spiritually advanced, do they have any special conception of morals? Indeed, they have, and their morals are great morals, much greater than the average human being can conceive of. It is not that by becoming free spiritually from the laws of the generality, they become free from their own laws. They have their own

laws to bind them, and these are much higher and much greater laws. No doubt their way of looking at things may be criticised and may not be generally understood. Yet, their law is more akin to nature ; their laws are in harmony with the spirit ; their laws have their effect as phenomena ; and by regarding two morals which are contrary to each other, the morals of the generality and their own morals, they arrive at a plane, and a condition where their hands and feet are nailed. That is the symbolical meaning of the nailing of Christ to the Cross.

## VI

### THE LAW OF THE INNER LIFE

THOSE who live the inner life begin to see a law which is hidden to the average man. There is the law of nature, which is known as science, and that of life, which is called moral law, but beyond science and morals there is another law. It may be called occult law, or in other words, inner law ; a law which can be understood by an open heart and an awakened soul.

This law manifests to the view of the seer in many and varied forms ; sometimes it appears in quite a contrary form to the effect that it has later on in its manifestation. The eye of the seer becomes a sword which cuts open, so to speak, all things, including the hearts of men, and sees clearly through all they contain ; but it is a cutting open which is at the same time healing.

In the Koran it is said : "He has taught man by the skill of his pen." And what does that mean? It means that to the man who lives the inner life, everything that he sees becomes a written character and this whole visible world a book. He reads it as plainly as a letter written by his friend. And besides this, he hears a voice within which becomes to him a language. It is an inner language ; its words are not the same as the words of the external language. It is a divine language. It is a language without words, which can only be called a voice, and yet it serves as a language. It is like music, which is as clear as a language to the musician. Another person enjoys music, but only the musician exactly knows what it says, what every note is, how it is expressed and what it reveals. Every phrase of music to him has a meaning ; every piece of music to him is a picture. But this I say only about a real musician.

People profess to have clairvoyance and clair-audience, and very often delude others by giving false prophecies, but the one who lives the inner life does not need to prophecy ; he does not need to tell others what he sees and what he hears. It is not only that he is not inclined to do so, but also he sees no necessity for it, besides, he cannot fully express himself. How difficult it is to translate fully the poetry of one language into the poetry of another ! Yet it is only interpreting the ideas of one part of the earth to the people of another part of the same earth. How much more difficult then it must be to translate or to interpret the ideas of the divine world to the human world. In what

words can they be given, what phrases can be used for them, and after being given even in words and phrases, who would understand them? It is the language of a different world.

Therefore, when the prophets and seers of all ages have given to humanity a certain message and law, it was only the giving of a drop from the ocean which they received into their hearts. And this also is a great difficulty, for even this drop is not intelligible. Does every Christian understand the Bible? Does every Mussulman know Koran, or every Hindu Vedanta? No, they may know the words of the verses but not always the real meaning. Among the Mussulmans there are some who know the whole Koran by heart, but that does not suffice for the purpose. The whole of nature is a secret book, yet it is an open book to the seer. How can man translate it, how can man interpret it? It is like trying to bring the sea onto the land ; one can bring it, but how much ?

The understanding of this law gives quite a different outlook on life to the seer, which makes him more inclined to appreciate all that is good and beautiful, to admire all that is worth admiring, to enjoy all that is worth enjoying, to experience all that is worth experiencing. It awakens the sympathy of the seer to love, to tolerate, to forgive, to endure and to sympathize ; it gives the inclination to support, to protect, and to serve those in need. But can he say what he really feels, how he really feels? No, he cannot say it even to himself.

Therefore, the one who lives the inner life is all



things ; he is as a physician who knows things that a physician cannot know ; as an astrologer who knows much more than the astrologer ; an artist who knows that which an artist could not know ; a musician who knows what a musician does not know, a poet who knows what the poet cannot perceive, for he becomes the artist of the entire world, the singer of the divine song. He becomes an astrologer of the entire cosmos, which is hidden to the sight of men. He does not need outer things as the signs of knowing the eternal life. His very life itself is the evidence of the everlasting life. To him death is a shadow, it is a change, it is turning the face from one side to the other. To him all things have their meaning, every movement in this world, the movement of the water, of the air, of the lightning and the thunder and the wind, every movement has a message for him, it brings to him some sign. To another person it is only the thunder, it is only a storm, but to him every movement has its meaning. And when he rises in his development, not only has every movement its meaning, but on every movement there is his command. It is that part of his life which becomes Mastership.

Besides this, in all affairs of this world, of individuals and multitudes, which confuse people, which bring them despair, and cause them depression, which give joy and pleasure, which amuse them,—he sees through all. He knows why it comes, from whence it comes, what is behind it,—what is the cause of it, and behind the seeming cause what is the hidden cause, and if he wished to trace the

cause behind the cause he could trace back to the primal cause, for the inner life is lived by living with the primal cause, by being in unity with the primal cause. Therefore the one who lives the inner life, in other words, who lives the life of God, God is in him and he is in God.

## VII

### THE OBJECT OF THE INNER LIFE

**I**S it power which is the object of the spiritual person, or is it inspiration after which he seeks? It is in fact neither of these things which he pursues, but all such things as power and inspiration follow him as he proceeds on his path toward the spiritual goal. The goal of the spiritual person is self-realization, and his journey is toward the depth of his own being, his God, his Ideal.

Does such a person sacrifice all interests in life, or does he consider the different objects that people have in their lives as something leading astray? Not at all; no doubt his object is the highest that any soul can have, but all other objects which he sees before himself in life do not necessarily hinder him on his path; they become as a staircase on his way, making his path easy to tread. Therefore the person living the inner life never condemns and does not criticize the objects of another, however small or ridiculous they may appear, for he knows that every object in the life of a person is but a stepping-stone which leads him forward if he only wishes to go forward.

There is a time in the life of a soul when it has the desire to play with dolls ; there is a seeking after toys. From the spiritual point of view there is no harm in that, and man sees in time the way that leads to the goal ; these are only passing interests leading to others, and in this way man goes forward.

Therefore according to the view of the seer man places before him at different times such objects as riches, pleasure, or a material heaven ; the spiritual person starts his journey from the point where these end. The process of evolution is not a straight way,—it is more like a wheel which is ever turning. So the experience of the person who treads the spiritual path begins to show a downward tendency and from that again upwards. For instance, in the spiritual path a person goes backwards, he experiences youth again, for spirituality gives health to the mind and to the body, it being the real life. He experiences vigor, strength, aspiration, enthusiasm, energy, and a living spirit that makes him feel youthful whatever be his age. Then he becomes as a little child, eager to play, ready to laugh, happy among children, he shows in his personality childlike traits, especially that look one sees in children where there is no worry, anxiety, or bitter feeling against anyone ; where there is a desire to be friendly with all, where there is no pride or conceit, but readiness to associate with anybody, whatever be the class or caste, nation or race ; so the spiritual person becomes like a child ; the tendency to tears, the readiness for laughter ; all these are found in the spiritual person.

As the spiritual person goes further he shows in

his nature infancy. This can be perceived in his innocence ; his heart may be lighted with wisdom, yet he is innocent ; he is easily deceived, even knowingly, besides being happy under all conditions, like an infant. As the infant has no regard for honour or for insult, neither has the spiritual person. When he arrives at this stage, he answers insult with a smile. Honours given to him are like honours given to a little baby who does not know to whom they are offered. Only the person who has given the honours knows that they have been given to somebody there. The spiritual one is not conscious of it, nor happy with it, nor proud of it. It is nothing to him. The one who has honoured him has honoured himself, since to the baby it is nothing if somebody should speak in favour of him or against him, the baby does not mind, he is ready to smile at both ; so is the spiritual soul.

As the spiritual soul proceeds further he begins to show the real traits of humanity ; for here humanity really begins, one can see in such a soul the signs which are the pure characteristics of the human being, devoid of the animal traits. For instance, there is a tendency in him to appreciate every little good deed done by anyone ; to admire good wherever he sees it in any person, a tendency to sympathize, whatever be the condition of the person, saint or sinner, a tendency to take interest in the affairs of his friends when called upon to do so ; a tendency to sacrifice, not considering what he sacrifices, as long as he is moved to do that action. Respect, gratitude, sincerity, faithfulness, patience, endurance, all these qualities begin to

show in the character of that man. It is in this stage that truly he can judge, for at this stage the sense of justice awakens.

But as he grows, he still continues to grow backwards. He now shows the signs of the animal kingdom. For instance such a quality as that of the elephant, which with all its strength and power of giant bulk is ready to take the load put upon it, the horse, which is ready to serve the rider ; and the cow which lives in the world harmoniously, comes home without being driven, gives milk which is the right of her calf. These qualities come to the spiritual person. The same thing is taught by Christ.\*

When he goes on further still, there develops in him the quality of the vegetable kingdom, of the plants which bring forth fruit and flowers, patiently waiting for the rain from above. Never asking any return from those who come to gather flowers and fruit, giving and never expecting a return, desiring only to bring forth beauty according to the capability which is hidden in them, and letting it be taken by the worthy or unworthy, whoever it be, without any expectation of appreciation or thanks.

And when the spiritual person advances still further he arrives at the stage of the mineral kingdom. He becomes as a rock, a rock for others to lean on, to depend upon, a rock that stands unmoved amidst the constantly moving waves of the sea of life ; a rock to endure all things of this world whose influence has a jarring effect upon

\*Gal. vi. 2.

sensitive human beings ; a rock of constancy in friendship, of steadiness in love, of loyalty to every ideal for which he has taken his stand. One can depend upon him through life and death, here and hereafter. In this world where nothing is dependable, which is full of changes every moment, such a soul has arrived at the stage, where he shows through all these changes that rock-like quality, proving thereby his advancement to the mineral kingdom.\*

His further advancement is into the "djinn" quality, which represents the all-knowing, all understanding. There is nothing he cannot understand ; however difficult the situation, however subtle the problem, whatever be the condition of those around him, he understands it all. A person may come to him hardened with faults that he has committed all his life, before this understanding he melts for whether it be a friend or an enemy, he understands both. Not only has he the knowledge of human nature, but of objects as well, of conditions of life in general in all its aspects.

And when he advances still further his nature develops into that of an angel. The nature of the angel is to be worshipful. He therefore worships God in all creatures ; he does not feel greater or to be any better or any more spiritual himself than anybody else. In this realization he is the worshipper of all the names and forms there are, for he considers them all the names and forms of God. There is no one, however degenerate or looked-down upon by the world, who is any less in his eyes. In

\*Isa. xxxii. 2.



his eyes there is no one but the Divine Being, and in this way every moment of his life is devoted to worship. For him it is no longer necessary that he must worship God at a certain time or in a certain house, or in a certain manner. There is not one moment that he is not in worship, every moment of his life he is in worship, he is before God, and being before God at every moment of his life he becomes so purified that his heart becomes a crystal where everything is clear, everything is reflected there, no one can hide his thoughts from him, nothing is hidden from him, all is known as clearly as it is known to the other person, and more so. For every person knows his own condition and yet not the reason, but the spiritual being at this stage knows the condition of the person and the reason behind it. Therefore he knows more about every person than that person knows himself.

It is this stage in which his progress culminates and comes to its fulness, and concerning this Christ has spoken in the words : " Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." When that stage arrives, it is beyond all expression. It is a sense, it is a realization, it is a feeling, which words can never explain. There is only one thing that can be said, that when a person has touched that stage which is called perfection, his thought, speech, action, his atmosphere, everything becomes productive of God ; he spreads God everywhere. Even if he did not speak, still he would spread God ; if he did not do anything, still he would bring God. And thus those God-realized ones bring to the world the living God. At present there exists in the world

only a belief in God, God exists in imagination, in the ideal. It is such a soul which has touched Divine Perfection that brings to the earth a living God, Who without him would remain only in the Heavens.

## VIII

### THE ATTAINMENT OF THE INNER LIFE

**I**N the attainment of the inner life there are five things necessary. The first thing that is necessary is the mastery of mind, and this is done by unlearning all that one has learned. The inner knowledge is not gained by adding to the knowledge one has already achieved in life, for it requires a rock foundation. One cannot build a house of rocks on a foundation of sand. Therefore in order to make the foundation of rocks, one has to dig into the sand and build the foundation on the rocks below. Therefore very often it becomes difficult for an intellectual person, who through life has learned things and understood them by the power of intellect, to attain to the inner life. For these two paths are different. The one goes to the north and the other goes to the south. When a person says : " I have now walked so many miles to the south, shall I therefore reach sooner something that exists in the north ? " He must know that he will not reach it sooner, but later, because as many hours as he has walked to the south he must walk back in order to reach the north.

Therefore it must be understood that all man learns and experiences in this life in the world, all

that he calls learning or knowledge, is only used in the world where he is learning, and bears the same relation to himself as the eggshell does to the chick ; but when he takes the path to the inner life that learning and knowledge is of no use to him. The more he is capable of forgetting that knowledge, of unlearning it, the more capable is he of attaining the object for which he treads the spiritual path. Therefore it has been a great struggle for those learned and experienced in the outer life, to think that after their great advancement in worldly knowledge they have to go back again. Often they cannot understand ; many among them think it is strange and are therefore disappointed. It is like learning the language of a certain country, when wanting to go into another country where that language is not understood, nor the language of the latter country understood by one's self. Just as there is the north pole and the south pole, so there is the outward and the inward life. The difference is still vaster, because the gap between the inner life and the outer life is vaster than the distance between the north pole and south pole. The one who advances to the south is not getting nearer to the north pole, but on the contrary he is going further from it ; in order to reach it he must turn right round. However, it is not difficult for the soul that is an earnest traveller on the Path. It is only using the enthusiasm in the opposite direction ; to turn the enthusiasm one has for learning something of the world into forgetting and unlearning it, in order to learn something of the inner life.

Now the question is how does one unlearn ?

Learning is forming a knot in the mind. Whatever one learns from experience or from a person, one makes a knot of it in the mind, and there are as many knots found as there are things one has learned. Unlearning is unravelling the knot, and it is as hard to unlearn as it is to untie a knot. How much effort it requires, how much patience it requires to unravel when one has made a knot and pulled it tight from both sides ! So it requires patience and effort to unravel the knots in the mind. And what helps the process ? The light of reason working with full power unravels the mental knots. A knot is a limited reason. When one unravels it its limitation is taken away, it is open. And when the mind becomes smooth by unlearning, and by digging out all impressions, of good and bad, of right and wrong, then the ground of the heart becomes as cultivated ground, just as the land does after ploughing. All the old stumps and roots and pebbles and rocks are taken off and it is made into ground which is now ready for the sowing of the seed. And if there are rocks and stones and bricks still scattered there, and still some of the old roots lying there, then it is difficult for the seed to be sown ; the ground is not in the condition the farmer wishes it to be.

The next thing in the attainment of the inner life is to seek a spiritual guide,—someone whom a man can absolutely trust and have every confidence in, someone to whom he can look up, and with whom he is in sympathy, which would culminate in what is called devotion. And if once he has found someone in life whom he considers his Guru,

his Murshid, his guide, then to give to him all confidence, so that not a thing is kept back. If there is something kept back then what is given might just as well be taken away, because everything must be done fully, either have confidence or not have confidence, either have trust or no trust. On this path of perfection all things must be done fully.

Now there are the particular ways of the guide, which depend upon his temperament and upon his discrimination in finding for everyone who is being guided a special way. He may lead them to their destination by the royal road, or through the streets and lanes, down to the sea or through the town, by land or by water. the way that to him seems the best under certain circumstances.

The third thing necessary to spiritual attainment is the receiving of knowledge. This being the knowledge of the inner world, it cannot be compared with the knowledge one has learned before. That is why it is necessary to unlearn the former. Man cannot adjust what he receives in this path with the ideas which he has held before ; the two things cannot go together. Therefore, there are three stages of receiving knowledge which the one being guided has to go through. The first stage is the receiving the knowledge, when he does nothing but receive. The next stage is the period after this, and that stage is the assimilating of what has been learned. He thinks upon it, he ponders upon it, in order that it may remain in his mind. It is just like eating food and then assimilating it. The third stage is the reasoning it out by oneself. Man does

not reason it out as soon as he has received it, if he did, he would lose the whole thing. Because it is like a person who has learned a and b and c at one stage, and then would ask how about words that did not begin with those letters. He would reason it out much sooner than he ought, for he has not yet learned the other letters. There is a time which must necessarily be given to receiving, as one gives the time to eating. While one is eating one does not run about in the street in order to assimilate the food. After he has finished his dinner then he can do everything possible to help digest it. Assimilating is clearly understanding, feeling and memorizing knowledge within one's self. Not only that, but waiting until its benefit and its illumination is coming as a result of achievement.

The third part then to the receiving of knowledge is reasoning ; to reason it through, "why was it like that? what benefit has come to me from that? how can it be made practicable in life? how can it benefit myself and others?" That is the third stage. If these stages are confused then the whole process becomes confused, and one cannot get that benefit for which one treads the spiritual path.

The fourth grade of attainment of the inner life is meditation. If one has unlearned all that he has learned, if one has a teacher, and if one has received the knowledge of the inner life, still meditation is one thing which is most necessary, which in the Sufi word is called "Riazat." In the first place meditation is done mechanically, at an hour which one has fixed upon as the hour for devotion or concentration. **The next step is to think of that**



idea of meditation at other times during the day. And the third stage is continuing meditation throughout day and night. Then one has attained to the right meditation. If a person does meditation only for fifteen minutes in the evening and then forgets altogether about it all day, he does the same thing as going to church on Sunday and the other days of the week forgetting all about it. Intellectual training no doubt has its use in the achievement of the inner life, but the principal thing is meditation. That is the real training. The study of one year and the meditation of one day are equal. By this meditation I mean the right kind of meditation. If a person closes his eyes and sits doing nothing he may just as well go to sleep. Meditation is not only an exercise to be practised. In meditation the soul is charged with new light and life, with inspiration and vigor ; in meditation there is every kind of blessing. Some become tired of meditation, but that does not mean that they meditate,—they become tired before having arrived at a stage where they really experience the effect of meditation, like those who become weary of practising the violin,—they are tired because they have not yet played the violin. If once they played they would never be weary. The difficulty is playing the violin and the difficulty is having patience with one's own playing. Patience is required in meditation ; why a person gets tired is because he is accustomed to activity throughout the day. His nerves are all inclined to go on and on in that activity, which is not really for his benefit, and yet it is giving him the inclination to go on ; and when he sits with his

eyes closed he feels uncomfortable, for the mind which has been active all day becomes restive, just like a horse after having had a long run. Then if you want that horse to stand still, it is restive. It cannot stand still, because every nerve has been active, and it becomes almost impossible to keep that horse still. And so it is with man. Once I was with a man who was in the habit of meditating, and while we were sitting near the fire and talking about things he went into the silence, and I had to sit quiet until he opened his eyes. I asked him, "it is beautiful, is it not?" and he said, "it is never enough." Those who experience the joy of meditation, for them there is nothing in this world which is more interesting and enjoyable. They experience the inner peace and the joy that cannot be explained in words, they touch Perfection, or the spirit of Light, of Life and of Love,—all is there.

The fifth necessity in the spiritual path is the living of the every-day life. There are not strict morals which a spiritual guide enforces upon a person, for that work has been given to the outward religions. It is the exoteric side of spiritual work to which the outer morals belong, but the *essence* of morals is practiced by those treading the spiritual path. Their first moral is constantly to avoid hurting the feeling of another. The second moral principle is to avoid allowing themselves to be affected by the constantly jarring influences which every soul has to meet in life. The third principle is to keep their balance under all different situations and conditions which upset this tranquil state of mind. The fourth principle is to love

unceasingly all those who deserve love, and to give to the underserving their forgiveness, and this is continually practiced by them. The fifth principle is detachment amidst the crowd, but by detachment I do not mean separation. By detachment only is meant rising above those bondages which bind man and keep him back from his journey toward the goal.

## IX

### THE ANGEL-MAN

THE Hindu word, "Deva" denotes an angel-man, and the Sufi term for this is Faristha-khaslat. Every soul has as its first expression angelic life, and therefore it is not surprising if man shows angelic traits in his life, for it is in the depth of his soul. The soul coming through different spheres and planes of existence partakes of different attributes, and the attributes of the lower world become so collected and gathered around the soul, that it almost forgets its very first experience of itself, its purest being. The soul that through all the worldly experiences has a tendency to turn towards its origin, its angelic state, shows a different character from the general characteristics of human beings. This soul shows the tendency of the compass that always points in a certain direction, whichever way it is moved or turned. And it is the same with a soul, whose nature it is to be pointing to the origin and source from which every soul comes.

Now this soul may have the same tendency from childhood, and through youth, and when grown

up it may still have the same tendency ; it may develop it more and more, but it is a tendency which is born with the soul and its magnetism is great. It attracts every other soul, because it is in contact with its real self, and that real self is the real self of every soul which it contacts, and therefore it acts as a magnet towards these souls. Deva is the name of this pure kind of human soul.

The next type of soul to the Deva is the Djnayn, from which comes the word "Djin." This is a characteristic of a soul that keeps in contact with the inner region, which is reflected outwardly in all that is beautiful. While the soul of every person is looking for the beauty which is outward, the attention of the Djin soul is directed not so much to that beauty which is reflected outwardly, as it is to the source of that beauty, which is within.

It is among those who live the inner life that these two characteristic types of the Deva or angel and the Djnayn or djin are mostly to be found, because they are less absorbed in the life of this world, so more attracted to the inner life. It does not mean that they are not occupied with the worldly life ; it does not mean that they take no interest in this world, in fact it is the interest in the external life which brings the soul towards it. If the soul were not interested in the world it would not come ; it is its interest which brings it. But to such a soul, while the external life is of interest, at the same time it is a disappointment. All that interests a fine soul in this world only interests as long as it does not touch it, once it has touched it this soul loses interest in it, its natural inclination is

to withdraw. The things which hold the average soul cannot hold this soul ; they can only attract, for this soul is seeking for something, and it sees its reflection outwardly, but when it touches it, it finds it was a shadow, and was not real, and it goes back disappointed, and so the life of the Deva or djin is spent in this manner.

The characteristic of the hare as described by the poets of India, is that when it is thirsty it runs about in the forests looking for water, and it is greatly delighted on hearing the sounds of thunder, and runs about with a desire to drink ; but sometimes it is only thunder and does not rain afterwards, or if it rains it is perhaps only a shower and not enough water to drink and the hare still remains thirsty. And so is the thirst of a fine soul in this world. The soul of the spiritually inclined man is constantly thirsty, looking for something, seeking for something, and when it thinks it has found, the thing turns out to be different and so life becomes a continual struggle and disappointment. And the result is that instead of taking interest in all things, a kind of indifference is produced, and yet in the real character of this soul there is no indifference ; there is only love. Although life seems to make this soul indifferent, it cannot really become indifferent, and it is this state working through this life that gives man a certain feeling, for which only a Hindu word is applicable, no other language has a word which can give you this particular meaning so adequately. The Hindus call it " Vairâgya " from which the term Vairâgi has come. Vairâgi means a person who has become indifferent, and

yet indifference is not the word for it. It describes a person who has lost the value in his eyes of all that attracts the human being. It is no more attractive to him; it no more enslaves him. He may still be interested in all things of this life, but not bound to them. The first feeling of the Vairâgi is to turn away from everything. That person shows the nature of the hare, which runs away at the flutter of a leaf, for the person becomes sensitive and convinced of the disappointing results that come from the limitation and changeableness of life in the world. Hurt within, he becomes sensitive, and the first thing that occurs to his mind is to fly, to hide somewhere, to go into a cave in the mountains, or into the forest where he will meet no one. No affair of this world, no relation, no friendship, no wealth, no rank or position or comfort, nothing holds him. And yet that does not mean that he in any way lacks what is called love or kindness, for if ever he lives in this world it is only out of love. When he is not interested in the world it is only love that keeps him here,—the love which does not express itself any more in the way of attachment, but only in the way of kindness, forgiveness, generosity, service, consideration, sympathy, helpfulness, in any way that it can, never expecting a return from the world, but ever doing all that he can, pitying the conditions, knowing the limitedness of life and its continual changeability.

When this Vairâgi becomes more developed, then he becomes like a serpent. He becomes wise like a serpent. He seeks solitude as the serpent seeks solitude. The serpent is never interested in



moving among the crowd ; it always has its home where it hides itself ; it only comes out when it is hungry or thirsty, and once it has taken its food it does not hunger or thirst after more as the dogs and cats do ; you can give them food again and again, and they still want more. When the serpent is once fed it goes into its hole and stays there until it wants food again ; it has lost all voraciousness. And so has the soul of the Vairâgi ; he only wants to live in this world for the sake of others, not for himself. His connection with people in the world is to serve them, not asking for their service, to love them, not asking for love ; to be friends with them, not asking for friendship. He never allows himself to be deceived a second time, once disappointed is sufficient. Once the Vairâgi has come to realize the falsehood of ordinary life he never allows himself to be deceived again. He sees the world with the eye of experience, and he says : " I do not expect anything from you ; if I come to you it is to give to you, not to take from you ; I do all things for you, but will not be bound to you." That is the watchword of the Vairâgi.

When the Vairâgi is still more developed in this feeling of Vairâgya then he becomes a lion. He is no more the serpent seeking solitude, although he loves it still ; he is no more the hare, running away from the crowd. He is the lion, who stands and faces all difficulties. No longer sensitive, but with all strength and power, with all balance, with patience he endures, and with a brave spirit he stands in the crowd in the world. For what ? To bear all things that come to him ; to endure all

the jarring influences that the world offers to a sensitive person ; to look into the eyes of all, being brave in spirit and strengthened in truth and clear of conscience. It is in this way that the lion-like soul of the Deva, the angel-man, comes to the rescue of humanity. What is called the master or the saint, or prophet or sage is this developed vairagi. He is like the fruit that has ripened on the tree, helped by the sun. In this way this soul that is ripened by experience in life, and has not allowed itself to become decayed by that experience but has upheld the truth, with balance, with hope and patience, directed by love for humanity and desire to serve God, without any desire for appreciation or return from below or from above, it is that soul of the Deva that brings the Divine Message, whenever the Message comes, to a community, a nation, or to the world.

## X

### FIVE DIFFERENT KINDS OF THE SPIRITUAL SOULS

**T**HOSE who live the inner life have to adopt a certain outer form of living in the world amidst people of all kinds. There are five principal ways known which the spiritual souls adopt to meet life in the world, although there are many more ways. Very often they are found in such forms of life that one could never imagine for one moment that they were living the inner life. It is for this reason that the wise of all ages have taught respect for every human being, whatever be the

outward character of that person ; and have advised man to think who is behind that garb and what it is.

Among the five principal characteristics of the spiritual being, the first is the religious character. This is a person who lives the religious life, the life of an orthodox person, like everybody else, not showing any outward trace of a deeper knowledge or wider view, though he realizes it within himself. Outwardly he goes to his religious temple, or his church, the same as everybody else. He offers his prayers to Deity in the same form as everybody, reads the Scriptures in the same way that everybody else does, receives the sacraments and asks for the benediction of the church in the same way that everybody does. He shows no difference, no special characteristics outwardly showing him to be spiritually advanced ; but at the same time while others are doing all their religious actions outwardly, he realizes them in his life in reality. Every religious action to him is a symbolical revelation ; prayer to him is a meditation ; the Scripture to him is his reminder, for the holy Book refers him to that which he reads in life, and in nature ; and therefore while outwardly he is only a religious man like everybody in the world, inwardly he is a spiritual man.

Another aspect of a spiritual man is to be found in the philosophical mind. He may not at all show any trace of orthodoxy or piety : he may seem to be quite a man of the world in business, or in the affairs of the worldly life. He takes all things smoothly, he tolerates all things,

endures all things. He takes life easily with his understanding. He understands all things inwardly ; outwardly he acts according to life's demand. No one may ever think that he is living the inner life. He may be settling a business affair, and yet he may have the realization of God and truth at the same time. He may not at all appear meditative or contemplative, and yet every moment of his life may be devoted to contemplation. He may take his occupation in everyday life as a means of spiritual realization. No one outwardly may consider for one moment that he is spiritually so highly evolved, except that those who come in contact with him may in time be convinced that he is an honest person ; that he is fair and just in his principles and life ; that he is sincere. That is all the religion he needs. In this way his outward life becomes his religion, and his inner realization his spirituality.

The third form of a spiritual being is that of a server, one who does good to others. In this form there may be saints hidden. They never speak about spirituality, nor much about the philosophy of life. Their philosophy and religion are in their action. There is love gushing forth from their heart every moment of their life, and they are occupied in doing good to others. They consider everyone who comes near them as their brother or sister, as their child, and take an interest in their joy and their sorrow, and do all they can to guide them, to instruct them, to advise them through their life. In this form the spiritual person may be a teacher, a preacher or a philanthropist, but

whatever form he may appear in, the chief thing in his life is the service of mankind, doing good to another, bringing happiness to someone in some form, and the joy that rises from this is high spiritual ecstasy, for every act of goodness and kindness has a particular joy which brings the air of heaven. When all the time a person is occupied doing good to others, there is a constant joy arising, and that joy creates a heavenly atmosphere, creating within him that heaven which is his inner life. This world is so full of thorns, so full of troubles, pains and sorrows, and in this same world he lives ; but by the very fact of his trying to remove the thorns from the path of another, although they prick his own hands, he rises, giving him that inner joy which is his spiritual realization.

There is the fourth form of a spiritual person, which is the mystic form, and that form is difficult to understand, because the mystic is born. Mysticism is not a thing which is learned, it is a temperament. A mystic may have his face turned toward the north while he is looking toward the south ; a mystic may have his head bent low and yet he may be looking up ; his eyes may be open outwardly while he may be looking inwardly ; his eyes may be closed and yet he may be looking outwardly. The average man cannot understand the mystic, and therefore people are always at a loss when dealing with him. His " yes " is not the same yes that everybody says ; his " no " has not the same meaning as that which everybody understands. In almost every phrase he says there is some symbolical meaning. His every outward action has an

inner significance. A man who does not understand his symbolical meaning may be bewildered by hearing a phrase which is nothing but confusion to him. A mystic may take one step outwardly, inwardly he has taken a thousand ; he may be in one city and may be working in another place at the same time. A mystic is a phenomenon in himself and a confusion to those around him. He himself cannot tell them what he is doing, nor will they understand the real secret of the mystic. For it is someone who is living the inner life and at the same time covering that inner life by outer action ; his word or movement is nothing but the cover of some inner action. Therefore those who understand the mystic never dispute with him. When he says " go," they go ; when he says " come," they come ; when he comes to them they do not say, " do not come," they understand that it is the time when he must come ; and when he goes from them they do not ask him to stay for they know it is the time when he must go.

Neither the laughter of a mystic, nor his tears are to be taken as any outward expression which means something. His tears may perhaps be a cover for very great joy, his smile, his laughter, may be a cover for a very deep sentiment. His open eyes, his closed eyes, the turning of his face, his glance, his silence, his conversation, nothing means the same that one is accustomed to understand. Yet it does not mean that the mystic does this purposely, he is so made ; no one could purposely do it even if he wished, no one has the power to do it. The truth is that the soul of the mystic is



a dancing soul. It has realized that inner law, it has fathomed that mystery for which souls long, and in the joy of that mystery the whole life of the mystic becomes a mystery. You may see the mystic twenty times a day and twenty times he will have a different expression. Every time his mood is different, and yet his outward mood may not at all be his inner mood. The mystic is an example of God's mystery in the form of man.

The fifth form in which a person who lives the inner life appears, is a strange form, a form which very few people can understand. He puts on the mask of innocence outwardly to such an extent that those who do not understand may easily consider him unbalanced, peculiar or strange. He does not mind about it for the reason that it is only his shield. If he were to admit before humanity the power that he has, thousands of people would go after him and he would not have one moment to live his inner life. The enormous power that he possesses governs inwardly lands and countries, controlling them and keeping them safe from disasters, such as floods and plagues and also wars, keeping harmony in the country or in the place in which he lives, and all this is done by his silence, by his constant realization of the inner life. To a person who lacks deep insight, he will seem a strange being. In the language of the East he is called Madzub. That same idea was known to the ancient Greeks and the traces of it are still in existence in some places, but mostly in the East. There are souls to be found to-day in the East, living in this garb, of a self-realized man who shows no trace

outwardly of philosophy or mysticism or religion, or any particular morals, and yet his presence is a battery of power, his glance most inspiring, a commanding expression in his looks, and if he ever speaks his word is the promise of God. What he says is Truth, but he rarely speaks a word, it is difficult to get a word out of him ; but once he has spoken, what he says is done.

There is no end to the variety of the outward appearance of spiritual souls in life, but at the same time there is no better way of living in this world, and yet living the inner life, than being *one's self*, outwardly and inwardly. Whatever be one's profession, work, or part in the outer life, to perform it sincerely, and truthfully, to fulfill one's mission in the outer life thoroughly, at the same time keeping the inner realization that the outer life, whatever be one's occupation, should reflect the inner realization of truth.











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